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PERCEIVED PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AS RELATED TO STUDENT TEACHING PLACEMENT AND JOB LOCATION.

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THIS INVESTIGATION IS CONCERNED WITH THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE STUDENT TEACHING LOCALE, THE PRESENT JOB LOCALE, AND THE CONGRUENCE OF STUDENT TEACHING AND JOB LOCALE WITH THE PERCEIVED DIFFICULTIES OF BEGINNING TEACHERS. THE SUBJECTS WERE 136 FIRST YEAR TEACHERS FROM THE JUNE 1963 CLASS OF QUEENS COLLEGE. THE INSTRUMENT CONSISTED OF 70 ITEMS COVERING 7 AREAS, AND ASKED FOR RESPONSES RANGING FROM A RATING OF 1 (CANNOT SOLVE) THROUGH 6 (DO NOT CONSIDER THIS A PROBLEM). THE PERCEIVED PROBLEM AREAS IN DESCENDING ORDER OF DIFFICULTY WERE (1) DISCIPLINE, (2) METHODS OF TEACHING, (3) RELATIONS WITH PARENTS, (4) EVALUATION OF STUDENTS, (5) CLASSROOM ROUTINES, (6) MATERIALS AND RESOURCES, (7) PLANNING. WHETHER THEIR STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCES WERE PART OF A SPECIAL PROGRAM, IN SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK CITY, OR IN REGULAR NEW YORK CITY AND SUBURBAN SCHOOLS, THERE WERE NO DISCERNIBLE MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE RESPONDENTS IN PERCEIVED DIFFICULTIES IN EACH OF THE PROBLEM AREAS. THERE WERE CITY-SUBURBAN DIFFERENCES IN THE 3 AREAS OF CLASSROOM ROUTINES, METHODS OF TEACHING, AND RELATIONS WITH PARENTS. WITHIN THE CITY GROUP THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN "SPECIAL SERVICE SCHOOL" TEACHERS AND NEW YORK CITY TEACHERS FOR THE SAME 3 AREAS AND FOR DISCIPLINE. PAPER READ AT ANNUAL CONVOCATION ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH (6TH, OCT. 19, 1965). (ADAPTED FROM AUTHORS' SUMMARY.) (RF)

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SUMMARY

This investigation is concerned with the association between the student teaching locale, the present job locale, and the congruence of student teaching and job locale with the perceived difficulties of beginning teachers. The subjects were 136 of 191 first year teachers of the June 1963 class of Queens College. The instrument consisted of 70 items covering 7 areas, and asked for responses ranging from a rating of 1 (cannot solve) through 6 (do not consider this a problem). The perceived problem areas in descending order of difficulty were:

1. Discipline
2. Methods of Teaching
3. Relations with Parents
4. Evaluation
5. Classroom Routines
6. Materials & Resources
7. Planning

The rankings were quite similar to those obtained in a study of June 1960 graduates except for the area of Planning. Average responses ranged from "somewhat difficult" to "easy to handle," again resembling the results of the 1960 study.

Whether their student teaching experiences were part of a special program, in special service schools of New York City, or in regular New York City and suburban schools, there were no discernible mean differences among the respondents in perceived difficulties in each of the problem areas.

There were city-suburban differences in perceived difficulties in the 3 areas:

1. Classroom Routines
2. Methods of Teaching
3. Relations with Parents

TABLE 1

Intercorrelations between Seven Problem Areas and Reliability of Each Area (Internal Consistency Reliability Presented on Diagonal) N=136

Problem Areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Classroom Routines	.78	.66	.48	.62	.51	.47	.68
2. Methods of Teaching		.80	.44	.57	.44	.58	.68
3. Materials & Resources			.75	.66	.40	.44	.30
4. Planning				.70	.34	.58	.50
5. Relations with Parents					.84	.52	.41
6. Evaluation						.74	.50
7. Discipline							.83

TABLE 2

Means and F Ratios for Problem Areas by Student Teaching Locale

Problem Areas	Special Program (N=30)	Special Service School (N=80)	N.Y.C. (N=24)	*F Ratios
1. Classroom Routines	49.16	48.82	49.04	
2. Methods of Teaching	42.60	43.40	42.12	
3. Materials & Resources	50.20	48.81	48.67	
4. Planning	49.27	49.45	48.79	
5. Relations with Parents	46.93	45.80	47.71	
6. Evaluation	46.40	46.85	47.04	
7. Discipline	41.23	42.09	42.79	

* All F Ratios less than 1.00

TABLE 3

Means and F Ratios for Problem Areas by Present Job Locale

Problem Areas	Special Service School N=44	N.Y.C. School N=55	Suburban N=37	F	P
1. Classroom Routines	45.97	49.04	52.32	11.05	.001
2. Methods of Teaching	39.89	42.85	47.03	10.52	.001
3. Materials & Resources	48.36	48.63	51.11	1.80	N.S.
4. Planning	48.31	49.05	50.86	2.52	N.S.
5. Relations with Parents	41.50	46.94	51.40	17.45	.001
6. Evaluation	45.31	46.71	48.69	2.95	N.S.
7. Discipline	39.32	42.84	44.22	4.19	.03

TABLE 4

F Ratios for City-Suburban and City-Special Service Mean Differences in Four Problem Areas

Problem Areas	City-Suburban F Ratio	City-Suburban P	City-Special Service F Ratio	City-Special Service P
1. Classroom Routines	13.64	.001	5.25	.03
2. Methods of Teaching	16.42	.001	4.28	.05
3. Relations with Parents	20.97	.001	10.00	.001
4. Discipline	3.56	N.S.	5.07	.04

TABLE 5

Means and F Ratios for Present Job Location and Student Teaching Locale Combined for Each Problem Area

Problem Areas	Student Teaching Like Present Job (N=102) Mean	Student Teaching Unlike Present Job (N=32) Mean	F Ratio
1. Classroom Routines ..	48.51	50.31	1.68
2. Methods of Teaching..	42.44	44.66	1.88
3. Materials & Resources	49.53	48.22	*
4. Planning	49.49	48.66	*
5. Relations with Parents	46.45	46.22	*
6. Evaluation	46.52	47.62	*
7. Discipline	41.56	43.50	1.44

* F Ratios less than 1.00

TABLE 6

Mean Scores and Rank Order of Difficulty as Found in 1963 and Present Studies

Problem Areas	1963 Study (N=78) Mean	1963 Study (N=78) Rank Order	Present Study (N=136) Mean	Present Study (N=136) Rank Order
1. Classroom Routines	43.14	7	48.93	5
2. Methods of Teaching ..	39.57	3	43.02	2
3. Materials & Resources ..	41.95	6	49.19	6
4. Planning	41.50	4	49.21	7
5. Relations with Parents .	38.36	2	46.39	3
6. Evaluation	41.59	5	46.77	4
7. Discipline	37.99	1	42.07	1

P rho=.72

Within the city group there were differences between "special service school" teachers and New York City teachers for the same 3 areas and for discipline.

Due to lack of control over variables during student teaching, the null hypotheses relevant to the effects of congruity could not be tested in an unequivocal manner.